HISTORY 264.01E: WITCHCRAFT IN SALEM
COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2015

T. H. Matteson, *The Trial of George Jacobs, August 5th, 1692* (1855)
Peabody and Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts

**Instructor:** Associate Professor John Howard Smith
**Class Location/Time:** Ferguson Social Sciences 150 / MWF 9:00-9:50 a.m.
**Office Location:** Ferguson Social Sciences 117
**Office Hours:** Mondays & Wednesdays, 2:00-4:00 p.m.; Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., or by appt.
**Office Phone:** 903-886-5219
**University Email Address:** John.Smith@tamuc.edu
COURSE INFORMATION

Course Prerequisites/Co-requisites: None

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:
Textbooks Required:

Supplemental Materials:
Xeroxed handouts
Various items posted to eCollege’s “Doc Sharing” section

Regarding the textbooks: Students are responsible for procuring the course textbooks before the first class meeting. Those who are unable to do so should not approach the Instructor to ask for any special consideration. Also, the correct editions of the textbooks must be acquired, as the readings quizzes are based upon the editions actually being used, and the use of older editions or different books may—and in many cases will—result in an inability to answer quiz questions properly and contribute adequately to class discussions.

Course Description:
No event in the history of colonial America is more controversial or magnetic as the Salem Witchcraft Trials (1691-93), prompting historian Mary Beth Norton to refer to it as “the 800-pound gorilla” of colonial American history. However, the strangeness of the event does not come from our present-day assumption of early modern ignorance and Puritan superstitions, but rather from the fact that it was a strange event for the late seventeenth century itself—an anomaly. Through the study of the trial transcripts and related documents of the investigation, as well as a few of the landmark scholarly works on the events of 1691-93, students will learn about the Puritans’ worldview and the socio-political milieu that shaped their reactions to the events leading up to the trials, become intimately familiar with the dynamics of the episode from beginning to end, and assess the historiography of the Salem witch trials in both monographs and articles.

Student Learning Outcomes:
1. Students will be able to form substantive and evidence-driven arguments to propose solutions to problems or explain phenomena.
2. Student communication will follow conventions of grammar and syntax appropriate to the audience, purpose and message.
3. Students will demonstrate awareness of societal and/or civic issues.
4. Students will be able to understand their role in their own education.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments
This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist students in achieving the outcomes/objectives for the course and instructional units/modules. Each week students will work on various combinations of readings, discussions, and research.
Student Responsibility Sheet

Student Learning Outcome no. 4:
The Student Responsibility Sheet consists of a series of questions about the Instructor and the course syllabus that must be filled out and submitted to the Instructor no later than Sept. 11. The form can be downloaded from the eCollege course site, or from the History Department homepage.

Attendance & Participation: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)

Student Learning Outcomes nos. 1, 2, & 3:
Participation in class discussions is intended to allow students to discuss substantively issues pertaining to the topics at hand, and will serve to inform the Instructor about how well students are absorbing course content. Facility in oral communication will thus be developed through these activities. Regular attendance to class is mandatory, and students intending to perform well in this aspect of the course must come to each class meeting prepared to discuss the day’s subjects and ask pertinent questions about the material. Routine absences and/or distractive behavior will negatively impact the participation grade.

Readings Quizzes: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)

Student Learning Outcomes nos. 1, 2, & 3:
The readings quizzes are designed to test students’ comprehension of the readings for each particular day a quiz is administered, testing the depth of their knowledge of the topic(s) at hand and their analytical skills. Administration will be random, and each quiz will take up no more than 10 minutes of class time at the beginning of each class period. Grading will be on a 0-10 point scale for each quiz, with a running average maintained through the semester that will be adjusted to a score from 0-100 at the end of the semester.

Group Debate: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)

Student Learning Outcomes nos. 1, 2, & 3:
The class will be divided into three groups, each of which will be tasked with mastering a particular significant historical interpretation of the Salem witch hunt, which they will present and defend in debate with their classmates during the penultimate week of the course. The group will be judged by the Instructor on the quality of their presentation and demonstrated understanding of the scholarly argument.

Final Exam: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)

Student Learning Outcomes nos. 1, 2, & 3:
The Final Exam, to be administered via eCollege, will be an open-book examination wherein students will be required to write substantive analytical essays in response to a series of questions within a two-hour time period. Students will be required to utilize their absorption of the course content, supplemented by their use of the course texts as evidentiary support, in order to compose fulsome responses to questions that test their understanding of the course content.
Grading

Grading will be calculated using a standard 10-point scale, with course elements weighted accordingly:

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<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance &amp; Participation (100 pts.)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Group Debate (100 pts.)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings Quizzes (10 pts. each)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam (100 pts.)</td>
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TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

As this course is conducted through eCollege, students will require the following hardware and software:

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. Windows XP or newer, and Internet Explorer 6.0 or newer is best.
Internet access/connection—high speed preferred (not dial-up).
Word Processor (preferably Microsoft Word 1997-2013 or newer).

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx.
You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:
Office hours are given at the top of this syllabus, and are posted outside of my door. Arrangements can be made if a student cannot meet with me during regular office hours for consultations. Email is the most reliable method of reaching me outside of my office. Expect a reply within 24 to 36 hours. Students may also be able to reach me by phone during office hours. In the event that a student leaves a voicemail, do not leave a callback number, but rather send an email or wait to see me during office hours.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Academic Honesty
It is the policy of the University, the History Department, and the instructor that no form of plagiarism or cheating will be tolerated. Plagiarism is defined as the deliberate use of another’s
work and claiming it as one’s own. This means ideas as well as text, whether paraphrased or presented verbatim (word-for-word). You are neither required nor expected to come up with original ideas about, or new interpretations of, American history. It is more important for students to understand why events unfolded in the ways they did, and what other scholars have said and written about them, so use proper citation in papers where appropriate (see paper assignment above). However, anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will automatically fail the assignment in question, may summarily fail the course, and could be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

Likewise, no element of the course grade is negotiable or optional, meaning that failure to take the exams or to submit the research paper in the absence of compelling, documented circumstances will result in automatic failure of the course. The instructor’s evaluative judgment of tests and examinations is final, and will not be subject to revision except in cases of mathematical error.

Class Decorum
All students must show respect toward the Instructor and the Instructor’s syllabus, presentations, assignments, and point of view. Students should also respect each other’s differences. If the Instructor determines that a student is not being respectful toward other students or the Instructor, or is otherwise behaving in an inappropriate manner, it is the Instructor’s prerogative to remove the student from the class either temporarily or permanently, as the case requires.

Note: Failure to comply with any of the Instructor’s policies will result in immediate deregistration from the course.

University Specific Procedures:
ADA Statement
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu
Student Disability Resources & Services

Student Conduct
All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook).
Aug. 31-Sept. 4: Introductions
   Aug. 31: Course Introduction
       Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt*, “Introduction” (Optional)

   Sept. 2: The European Religious Background
       Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, chap. 1 (handout)

   Sept. 4: Defining and Prosecuting Witchcraft in Sixteenth-Century Europe

Sept. 7-11: Puritanism in a World of Wonders
   Sept. 7: Labor Day Holiday—No Class

   Sept. 9: Puritanism in Old and New England

   Sept. 11: A "World of Wonders"
       Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt* (pp. 37-38), docs. 1-9
       **Student Responsibility Sheets Due**

Sept. 14-18: Salem, Massachusetts
   Sept. 14: Defining and Prosecuting Witchcraft in Seventeenth-Century America

   Sept. 16: Salem Town and Salem Village
       Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, “Introduction”

   Sept. 18: The First Afflictions
       Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 1 (pp. 15-24)
       Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt* (pp. 50-51), docs. 10-13

Sept. 21-25: Determining What Was Happening
   Sept. 21: The First Examinations
       Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 1 (pp. 24-43)
       Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt* (pp. 66-67, 81-82), docs. 28-32

   Sept. 23: The First Suspects Arrested
       Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 2 (pp. 44-61)
       Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt* (pp. 67-68), docs. 14-18

   Sept. 25: Mounting Suspicions
       Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 2 (pp. 61-81)
       Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt* (pp. 92-93), docs. 33-37

Sept. 28-Oct. 2: Salem and the Indian Wars
   Sept. 28: The First and Second Indian Wars
       Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 3 (pp. 82-102)

   Sept. 30: The Second Indian War
       Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 3 (pp. 102-111)

   **Oct. 2: No Class Meeting?**
Oct. 5-9: Rev. George Burroughs as the Coven Leader
   Oct. 5: “The Dreadfull Apparition of a Minister”
      Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 4 (pp. 112-132)
      Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt* (pp. 128-129), docs. 62-64
   Oct. 7: The Satanic Minister
      Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 4 (pp. 132-149)
      Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt*, docs. 65-66
   Oct. 9: “A Confederate of the Devil”
      Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 4 (pp. 149-155)
      Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt*, docs. 67-68

Oct. 12-16: Fanning the Flames
   Oct. 12: More Accusations, More Arrests
      Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 5 (pp. 156-167)
   Oct. 14: The Convening of the Court of Oyer and Terminer
      Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 5 (pp. 167-182)
      Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt*, docs. 44-45
   Oct. 16: Many Offenders in Custody
      Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 5 (pp. 182-193)

Oct. 19-23: The First Trials
   Oct. 19: “Errour or Folly”
      Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 6 (pp. 194-204)
   Oct. 21: Questions and Caveats
      Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 6 (pp. 204-219)
   Oct. 23: “I am no more a Witch than you are a Wizard”
      Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 6 (pp. 219-231)

   Oct. 26: “What kind of Man Is Mr Burroughs?”
      Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 7 (pp. 232-241)
      Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt*, docs. 70-71
   Oct. 28: “never was a Prisoner more eminent”
      Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 7 (pp. 241-251)
      Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt*, docs. 72-73
   Oct. 30: “most appears . . . like a black man”
      Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare*, chap. 7 (pp. 252-265)
      Godbeer, *The Salem Witch Hunt*, docs. 74-75
Nov. 2-6: The Court under Attack
   Nov. 2: A Chorus of Criticism
       Norton, In the Devil’s Snare, chap. 8 (pp. 266-278)
       Godbeer, The Salem Witch Hunt (pp. 143-144), docs. 76-79

   Nov. 4: Gov. Phips Dissolves the Court of Oyer and Terminer
       Norton, In the Devil’s Snare, chap. 8 (pp. 278-290)
       Godbeer, The Salem Witch Hunt, docs. 80-83

   Nov. 6: The Final Trials
       Norton, In the Devil’s Snare, chap. 8 (pp. 290-294)
       Godbeer, The Salem Witch Hunt, docs. 84-85

Nov. 9-13: The Aftermath
   Nov. 9: Salem Still Divided
       Norton, In the Devil’s Snare, “Conclusion” (pp. 295-304)
       Godbeer, The Salem Witch Hunt (167-168), docs. 86-87

   Nov. 11: Mea Culpas
       Godbeer, The Salem Witch Hunt, docs. 88-91

   Nov. 13: Overturning Convictions and Compensating Victims
       Norton, In the Devil’s Snare, chap. 8 (pp. 305-308) and “Epilogue”
       Godbeer, The Salem Witch Hunt, docs. 92-95

Nov. 16-20: Historians and the Witch Trials
   Nov. 16: The Boyer-Nissenbaum Thesis
       **Group I Students Only**

   Nov. 18: The Karlsen Thesis
       **Group II Students Only**

   Nov. 20: The Norton Thesis
       **Group III Students Only**

Nov. 23: No Class—Happy Thanksgiving!

Nov. 30-Dec. 4: Debating Interpretations
   Nov. 30: Group I Presentation

   Dec. 2: Group II Presentation

   Dec. 4: Group III Presentation

Dec. 7-11: The Crucible—History vs. Hollywood
   Aug. 31: Part I

   Sept. 2: Part II

   Sept. 4: Part III
Dec. 14-18: Final Exam (on eCollege)